

THE BIRDS OF RHODE ISLAND

BY

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AND

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Newport Natural History Society.

THE NATIVE MAMMALS OF RHODE ISLAND.

One of the objects of the Newport Natural History Society is the collection and preservation of specimens and facts relating to the native products of the State of Rhode Island. The undersigned has been requested to prepare a circular of inquiry respecting the mammals of this State, for the purpose of eliciting as much information as possible concerning them, with a view to preparing an authoritative list of the mammals which have inhabited Rhode Island during the period of its occupation by the Whites, and of any fossil species whose remains have been found within the State.

Some of the largest animals have already disappeared from Rhode Island, and others are on the verge of extinction. It is extremely unfortunate that any of our native mammals should have been allowed to pass away without so much as a record of their characters and peculiarities having been preserved. To provide against such a calamity in the future, the Newport Natural History Society proposes to preserve specimens and records of all that remain. To this end, an historic collection of State Mammals is being formed. The Society is especially desirous of obtaining without delay all of the species of mammals that are in imminent danger of extinction.

Living or mounted specimens, skins, bones (especially skulls), teeth, horns, nests, and all materials relating to Rhode Island mammalogy, will be welcome additions to the Society's museum, and will be gratefully received, acknowledged, and registered. They should be marked "specimens for the Newport Natural History Society," and sent to the address given below. The writer will be pleased to identify and return any specimens sent to him for determination.

Of fossil mammals and those which have been extirpated within the historic period, any remains, however imperfect or fragmentary, such as bones, teeth, horns, etc., should be sent to the Society's museum for preservation, as they are exceedingly precious. A jaw or horn of an Elk or Moose, dug from the soil of Rhode Island, would be much more valuable than a perfectly mounted specimen of the same animal from some other region.

The species of recent mammals which have been positively ascertained to belong to the fauna of Rhode Island are below enumerated, in list *A*; those whose presence or occurrence is supposed to be probable, on the ground of their having been found in the adjacent States or waters, are given in list *B*.

Respecting each of the animals given in lists *A* and *B*, information is requested as follows:—

a. Does it live in your locality at present? If so, is it common or rare?

b. If formerly present, but now extinct, give particulars concerning its extirpation, and the dates when the last individuals were seen or killed.

c. How many young are produced, and at what season?

d. Describe its nest, burrow, or habitation.

e. Give the times—exact dates when possible—of appearance and disappearance of such species as are migratory (e. g. the Red Bat), and of such as hibernate (Woodchuck, Jumping-mouse, etc.).

f. In what manner is it injurious or beneficial to man, in your district? (In the cases of noxious species, state the number destroyed during current and preceding years, and give the amounts paid out in bounties offered for their destruction; also give statistics or estimated numbers of food species annually sent to market, and of pelts of fur-bearing animals taken, together with any other facts relative to their economic uses.)

g. Give as many facts as you can, concerning the habits, actions, voice, traits, and general characteristics of each. If attempts have been made to breed any species in confinement, for economic uses, state with what result.

h. Add any information in your possession, supposed to be of interest in connection with Rhode Island mammals.

i. Name any species of mammals which have been found in Rhode Island, not given in list A, giving as full particulars as possible respecting each.

j. Give the names and addresses of persons who are especially interested in hunting or trapping mammals, and especially of those who deal in skins, or have formed collections of specimens.

k. Give full particulars concerning the discovery, at any time, of bones, teeth, horn or other remains of mammals in this State, and if possible describe their present location and condition.

A. LIST OF THE WILD MAMMALS KNOWN TO HAVE INHABITED THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND DURING THE HISTORIC PERIOD.*

1. OPOSSUM. *Didelphis virginiana* Kerr.
2. COMMON BOTTLE-NOSE PORPOISE. *Tursiops tursio* (Fabricius).
3. COMMON DOLPHIN. *Delphinus delphis* Linnæus.
4. HARBOR PORPOISE; PUFFING PIG; SNUFFER. *Phocæna phocæna* (Linnæus).
5. BLACKFISH; PILOT WHALE. *Globicephalus melas* (Traill).
6. WHITE WHALE; BELUGA. *Delphinapterus leucas* (Pallas).
7. BOTTLE-NOSE WHALE. *Hyperoodon rostratus* (Chemnitz).
8. SPERM WHALE. *Physeter macrocephalus* Linnæus.
9. RIGHT WHALE. *Balæna cisarctica* Cope.
10. FIN-BACK WHALE. *Sibbaldius tectirostris* Cope.
11. VIRGINIAN DEER. *Odocoileus virginianus* (Boddaert).
12. MOOSE. *Alce americanus* Jardine.

*All are native except the House Rat and House Mouse. Several naturalized races of Man (*Homo sapiens* Linnæus) are omitted, among them the subspecies *europæus*, *asiaticus*, and *afer*, all of Linnæus; but the native Red Man is included.

13. SOUTHEASTERN RED SQUIRREL. *Sciurus hudsonicus loquax* Bangs.
14. NORTHERN GRAY SQUIRREL. *Sciurus carolinensis leucotis* (Gapper).
15. NORTHEASTERN CHIPMUNK. *Tamias striatus lysteri* (Richardson).
16. WOODCHUCK; GROUNDHOG. *Arctomys monax* (Linnæus).
17. SOUTHERN FLYING SQUIRREL. *Sciuropterus volans* (Linnæus).
18. AMERICAN BEAVER. *Castor canadensis* Linnæus.
19. HOUSE MOUSE. *Mus musculus* Linnæus.
20. HOUSE RAT; WHARF RAT. *Mus decumanus* Pallas.
21. NORTHEASTERN DEER MOUSE; BUCK MOUSE. *Peromyscus leucopus noveboracensis* (Fischer).
22. COMMON RED-BACK MOUSE. *Eutamias gapperi* (Vigors).
23. COMMON MEADOW-MOUSE. *Microtus pennsylvanicus* (Ord).
24. NORTHERN PINE MOUSE. *Microtus pinetorum scalopsoides* (Audubon and Bachman).
25. MUSKRAT. *Fiber zibethicus* (Linnæus).
26. MEADOW JUMPING-MOUSE. *Zapus hudsonius* (Zimmermann).
27. NORTHEASTERN COTTONTAIL. *Lepus floridanus transitionalis* (Bangs).
28. SOUTHERN VARYING HARE. *Lepus americanus virginianus* (Harlan).
29. NORTHEASTERN PANTHER. *Felis oregonensis hippolestes* (Merriam).
30. WILDCAT. *Lynx rufus* (Gueldenstaedt).
31. RED FOX. *Vulpes fulvus* Desmarest.
32. TIMBER WOLF. *Canis occidentalis* (Richardson).
33. BLACK BEAR. *Ursus americanus* Pallas.
34. RACCOON. *Procyon lotor* (Linnæus).
35. NORTHEASTERN OTTER. *Lutra canadensis* (Schreber).
36. SKUNK. *Mephitis mephitis* (Shaw).
37. SOUTHEASTERN MINK. *Putorius (Lutreola) vison lutrecephalus* (Harlan).
38. BONAPARTE WEASEL. *Putorius cicognanii* (Bonaparte).
39. NEW YORK WEASEL. *Putorius noveboracensis* Emmons.
40. FISHER. *Mustela pennanti* Erxleben.
41. GREENLAND SEAL; HARP SEAL. *Phoca grælandica* Fabricius.
42. HARBOR SEAL. *Phoca vitulina* Linnæus.
43. MASKED SHREW. *Sorex personatus* I. Geoffroy St. Hilaire.
44. SHORT-TAIL SHREW. *Blarina brevicauda* (Say).
45. STAR-NOSE MOLE. *Condylura cristata* (Linnæus).
46. SILVERY BAT. *Lasiorycteris noctivagans* (Le Conte).
47. LARGER BROWN BAT. *Vespertilio fuscus* Beauvois.
48. HOARY BAT. *Lasiurus cinereus* (Beauvois).
49. RED BAT. *Lasiurus borealis* (Müller).*
50. RED MAN; AMERICAN INDIAN. *Homo sapiens americanus* Linnæus.

NOTE.—The mammals inhabiting the islands off the coast of Rhode Island, including those of Narragansett Bay, are of special interest, and lists of the species belonging to each island are much desired. A distinct species of Meadow-mouse (*Microtus nesophilus* Bailey) is restricted to two small islands in Long Island Sound, New York; and Mr. Outram Bangs, who has collected the mammals of Block Island, R. I., and compared them with the mainland forms which they represent, is of the opinion that some will require separation. Critical comparisons of all our insular mammals with those of the mainland will perhaps result in other additions to the present list than those which are expected to result from Mr. Bangs's studies of the Block Island species.

*A 'Light Brown or Wood Bat,' familiar to Mr. Frank Blake Webster, at Lonsdale and Dagget's, Rhode Island, from 1867 to 1884, was probably a species of *Myotis* or *Pipistrellus*.

B. LIST OF THOSE SPECIES OF RECENT MAMMALS WHOSE OCCURRENCE IN RHODE ISLAND MAY BE LOOKED FOR WITH SOME DEGREE OF PROBABILITY.*

1. STRIPED DOLPHIN. *Lagenorhynchus acutus* Gray.
2. KILLER. *Orca orca* (Linnæus).
3. GRAY GRAMPUS; COW FISH. *Grampus griseus* (Cuvier).
4. NORTHEASTERN FOX SQUIRREL. *Sciurus ludovicianus vicinus* Bangs.
5. SOUTHEASTERN CHIPMUNK. *Tamias striatus striatus* (Linnæus).
6. CANADIAN FLYING SQUIRREL. *Sciuropterus sabrinus macrotis* Mearns.
- * 7. BLACK RAT. *Mus rattus* Linnæus.
8. CANADIAN DEER MOUSE. *Peromyscus canadensis* (Miller).
9. CAVE RAT. *Neotoma pennsylvanica* Stone.
10. NEW JERSEY RED-BACK MOUSE. *Eutamias gapperi rhoadsi* Stone.
11. ROCK VOLE. *Microtus chrotorrhinus* (Miller).
12. BOG LEMMING. *Synaptomys cooperi* Baird.
13. WOODLAND JUMPING-MOUSE. *Napæozapus insignis* Miller.
- * 14. CANADIAN PORCUPINE. *Erethizon dorsatus* (Linnæus).
15. SOUTHEASTERN COTTONTAIL. *Lepus floridanus mallurus* (Thomas).
16. CANADIAN LYNX. *Lynx canadensis* (Kerr).
- * 17. GRAY FOX. *Urocyon cinereoargenteus* (Schreber).
18. WOLVERINE. *Gulo luscus* (Linnæus).
19. NORTHEASTERN MINK; LITTLE BROOK MINK. *Putorius* (*Lutreola*) *vison vison* (Schreber).
20. MARTEN. *Mustela americana* Turton.
21. HOODED SEAL. *Cystophora cristata* (Erxleben).
22. WATER SHREW. *Sorex* (*Neosorex*) *albibarbis* (Cope).
- * 23. SMOKY SHREW. *Sorex fumeus* Miller.
24. BIG-TAIL SHREW. *Sorex macrurus* Batchelder.
25. HOY SHREW. *Sorex hoyi* Baird.
26. SMALLER SHORT-TAIL SHREW. *Blarina parva* (Say).
27. NAKED-TAIL MOLE. *Scalops aquaticus* (Linnæus).
28. HAIRY-TAIL MOLE; BREWER MOLE. *Parascalops breweri* (Bachman).
29. LITTLE BROWN BAT. *Myotis lucifugus* (Le Conte).
30. SAY BAT. *Myotis subulatus* (Say).
- * 31. GEORGIAN BAT. *Pipistrellus subflavus subflavus* (F. Cuvier).
32. DUSKY BAT. *Pipistrellus subflavus obscurus* Miller.

NOTE.—Among fossil mammals, species of the Walrus, Peccary, Horse, Elephant, Mastodon, and the Beaver-like *Castoroides*, are to be looked for.

*These have been found in neighboring States or waters. Some are now extinct, but records or remains of them may exist.

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Prepared and signed at the request of the Newport Natural History Society by Doctor EDGAR A. MEARNS, U. S. A., to whom replies may be addressed, at Fort Adams, Newport, R. I.

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* Since added to the fauna of Rhode Island.

